



# press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Closure of JACADS to be Celebrated— Honolulu ceremony will be followed by a ceremony at Johnston Island**

JOHNSTON ISLAND, Pacific — Nasty relics of the Cold War – aging chemical weapons – are one step closer to becoming chemical weapons history. The U.S. Army has completed its mission of destroying all chemical weapons and associated facilities at the first of nine U.S. chemical weapons storage sites.

On Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2003, the successful safe dismantling and closure of the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS) will be celebrated at a ceremony at the Hale Koa Hotel's Luau Garden in Honolulu, Hawaii. The following morning, government VIPs, officials and regulators will make the three-hour flight to Johnston Island to tour the island and place a commemorative plaque where the disposal facility stood—now a field of crushed coral.

JACADS located on Johnston Island, 825 miles southwest of Hawaii, made chemical weapons history as the first U.S. full-scale chemical weapons disposal facility and by:

- Being the first of nine U.S. chemical weapons storage sites to destroy all chemical weapons and associated facilities. JACADS finished agent and weapons disposal on Nov. 29, 2000.
- Completing its mission while protecting employees, fish, wildlife, and the environment. Scientific studies show that fish and wildlife have thrived and increased during the mission.
- Serving as the prototype facility upon which the design and operation of four other disposal facilities are based. Two of those facilities are destroying weapons now and the other two are slated to begin disposal operations in 2004.

Johnston Island chemical weapons operations resulted in the destruction of 6.6% of the total U.S. stored chemical weapons—412,732 munitions, including projectiles, rockets, bombs and land mines and more than four million pounds of nerve agents GB and VX, as well as blister agent.

Johnston Island is no stranger to playing a key role in military history. The island, shelled by Japan shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, served as a refuel and supply point for aircraft and submarines in World War II, and supported airlift operations during the Korean War. It served as a test site for atmospheric nuclear tests in the 1950s and 1960s and began receiving and storing U.S. made chemical munitions shipped from Okinawa in 1971, the former West Germany in 1990, and Solomon Islands in 1991.

As of Oct. 15, 2003, the Chemical Materials Agency has destroyed 26 percent of the original U.S. chemical weapons stockpile.

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*For more information  
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*The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency is responsible for safely storing and eliminating the United States' aging chemical weapons and agent stockpiles and for the safe elimination of recovered chemical materiel.*